

THE TWENTY-THIRD
ANNUAL REPORT
ON THE
HEALTH AND SANITARY
:: CONDITION ::
OF THE
URBAN DISTRICT OF DESBOROUGH,
FOR
1914,

BY
HENRY GIBBONS, M.D., C.M.,
Medical Officer of Health; Fellow of the Incorporated Society of
Medical Officers of Health, &c.

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DESBOROUGH,

March, 1915.

THE DESBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting to you my Twenty-third Annual Report for the year ended December 31st, 1914.

The several Tabulated Forms, duly filled in, having reference to Vital Statistics, Notified Infectious Disease, Causes of and Ages at Death, and Infant Mortality—besides those relating to the administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, required by the Home Office—are hereto appended, and will repay careful examination.

The main part of the town of Desborough is situated on an elevation of ground having a gentle slope towards the south-east. Within recent years there have been extensions in the directions of the Braybrook and Rothwell Roads respectively; and in the latter locality an estate, owned by the local Co-operative Society, has been laid out on modern lines as building plots, with excellently constructed roads bordered by trees. Here a considerable number of comfortable and airy cottages, mostly belonging to members of the artisan class, have already been erected. More recently another estate, also the property of the Co-operative Society, lying to the south of Paddock Lane, has likewise been opened out for building purposes. A roadway passing through it,

named Dunkirk Avenue, when completed will connect the High Street directly with Rushton Road at a spot near the Cemetery. Here again some excellent cottages, privately owned by members of the society, have already sprung up.

The lowest point in the district, situated near the bridge on the Rothwell Road, is about 309 feet; and the highest, near the north-eastern boundary, about 478 feet above Ordnance sea-level.

The Ise brook, which forms the south-western boundary of the parish, flows in a south-easterly direction, and receives the purified effluent of the Sewage Farm.

A section of the general geographical strata affords in regular order Loamy soil, Clayey sub-soil, and Northampton sand resting on a bed of upper lias clay.

The principal industries of the town are agriculture, the manufacture of boots and shoes, corsets, and cardboard boxes, brickmaking and ironstone quarrying.

The population of the district at the Census of 1911 was 4,093. I have estimated the population at the middle of 1914 at 4,276.

Birth and Birth-rate.

There were 82 births, 39 males and 43 females, registered; and of these, 3 were illegitimate. This is equivalent to a birth-rate of 19.17 per 1,000 living—the lowest ever recorded—and, as the Table shows, little more than half the rate for 1909.

General Mortality.

There were 51 deaths to record, 4 of which took place outside the district. Of these 51, 29 were males and 22 females. The net death-rate was 11·92 per 1,000 living, as against 13·74 for 1913.

It is interesting to note that 13 persons, of whom 7 were more than 80 years old, died at the age of 70 and upwards.

A perusal of Table III. shows that the chief causes of death were Organic Heart Disease, Cancer, Bright's Disease, Pneumonia, and Phthisis; and that these diseases were responsible for more than half the total number of deaths.

Infantile Mortality.

The number of deaths of children below the age of 1 year was 5, including 1 illegitimate, making a rate of 60·9 per 1,000 births registered. This is decidedly lower than the rate for the previous year, which was 108·6. In 2 of the cases death took place within 1 week of birth.

The question of the joint appointment of a Health Visitor by the Urban District Councils of Desborough and Rothwell was considered, but unfortunately no agreement was come to by the parties.

It is to be hoped that this matter will at no distant date, again claim your attention, and then secure a happier result. All who have at heart the welfare of the babies will have no difficulty in deciding that in order to maintain the satisfactorily low rate now reported to you, the assistance of a Health Visitor is very

necessary. The work of such an official, while benefiting the mothers and infants would, at the same time, be pregnant with possibilities of rendering invaluable services to the community at large.

Tuberculosis.

Pulmonary Tuberculosis was responsible for 4 deaths, of 2 males and 2 females, and non-Pulmonary for 1 death, of a female; all within the age period of 15 to 45 years. The Tuberculosis death-rate was therefore 1·16 per 1,000 population, as against ·71 for the previous year.

There were 10 primary notifications of the disease received, all pertaining to the Pulmonary form.

During the year, treatment in Sanatoria under the provisions of the Insurance Act were obtained by 3 patients, and 1 of these has been so far benefited as to be able to return home and resume her work at the factory.

Respiratory Diseases Mortality.

The mortality rate for Respiratory Diseases was 1·40 per 1,000, 5 deaths having been registered as due to Pneumonia and 1 to Bronchitis. The rate for the year 1913 was 1·18.

General Zymotic Mortality.

Diphtheria and Enteritis—diseases included in the Zymotic class—were the causes of 2 deaths, which is equivalent to a Zymotic rate of mortality of ·46. This rate compares very favourably with that for the year 1913, viz. 0·94 per 1,000 of the population.

Scarlet Fever.

There were notified 14 cases of Scarlet Fever, these occurred in 12 houses and at varying intervals throughout the year. Fortunately the disease presented itself in a mild form, and there is no mortality to report.

As each case was reported every inquiry was made by your officers into the circumstances attendant upon the occurrence of the same, but, with the exception of the two secondary cases in one house, no obvious source of infection could be discovered, or any connection between the cases.

Although in a working-class dwelling, with the limited means at disposal, anything approaching an ideal state of isolation cannot be expected, it is satisfactory to note that, with only one exception, the disease was confined in each case to the patient originally attacked, in spite of the existence, more or less, of susceptible material in the households concerned. This is very gratifying as showing that those in charge of the sufferers from this malady had made loyal endeavours to carry out the advice and instructions of your officials, and had thereby prevented the disease in question assuming an epidemic character.

Diphtheria.

Seven cases of Diphtheria were notified, one in May and the others during the latter half of the year. Unfortunately one case terminated in death, which occurred with startling suddenness.

The fullest inquiry failed to discover any common source which might be the cause of the outbreak, but

some local defects found in the drainage of all the houses inspected probably accounted for the occurrence of the cases.

Enteric Fever.

During the year there were two cases of Enteric Fever ; both patients happily recovered.

Inspection of the premises proved that the drainage was in a satisfactory condition, and no suspicion could be attached to the water or milk supply. It is interesting to note, as possibly explaining the incidence of these cases, that Enteric Fever had occurred in the cottages in question not many years ago, and members of the family had been sufferers.

Poliomyelitis.

The only case of Poliomyelitis notified was that of a boy aged six years. The patient did not come under medical treatment until a week after the onset of the illness, when certain muscles of the right arm had become affected with paralysis. All due precautionary measures were taken, both by isolation of the patient and by disinfection, to prevent the disease from spreading.

Schools.

The sanitary conditions and water-supply of the Public Elementary Schools are satisfactory.

During the year the Church School has been remodelled to meet the requirements of the Education Authorities ; increased cubic space per child has been provided in class rooms with light, ventilation, and heating in accordance with present day regulations. The playgrounds, which were totally inadequate, have

been greatly extended, and in fact, are now much in excess of the minimum requirements of the authorities. The provision of additional latrine accommodation in the playgrounds and new lavatory basins in three new cloakrooms constitute decided improvements.

Isolation Hospital and Disinfection.

Beyond a structure of wood and corrugated iron on the Harrington Road, which was erected several years ago for the reception of Small-pox patients at a time when there was grave apprehension of an outbreak, there is no hospital for infectious diseases.

The urgent need for a steam disinfecter for the district has been brought to the notice of the Council from time to time, but although on each occasion the proposal received favourable consideration, the cost involved was given as the reason for not carrying it into effect.

Water Supply.

The water obtained through both pumping stations was periodically analysed during the year and found to be satisfactory in quality. At no time was any anxiety felt as to the sufficiency of the supply.

Dwelling-Houses and Overcrowding.

Eleven new houses have been built during the year, all of which were to be occupied by their owners. There is a great demand for houses for the growing population, but there seems no disposition on the part of private enterprise to meet this by the erection of cottages.

In the matter of the housing of the labouring population, I may remind you that you possess great powers under the Housing of the Working Classes Acts,

1890 to 1903, and the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act of 1909; and would suggest the early and serious consideration of an exercise of these powers.

There were three cases of overcrowding reported, and the nuisances were duly abated. This number would in all probability have been far exceeded had it not been for the constant supervision of your Inspector in certain directions. Too frequently there was a real difficulty in dealing with these cases of overcrowding, especially where two families occupy one dwelling, as when criticism is offered the persons concerned are able to plead the scarcity of houses as an excuse.

The following table furnishes the information called for by Art. V. of the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910:—

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of dwelling-houses inspected under and for the purposes of Section 17 of the Act of 1909: | 78 |
|---|----|

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of dwelling-houses which on inspection were considered to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation: | 1 |
|--|---|

| | |
|---|-----|
| Number of representations made to the local authority with a view to the making of closing orders: | Nil |
|---|-----|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of closing orders made: | Nil |
|---------------------------------------|-----|

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of dwelling-houses the defects in which were remedied without the making of closing orders: | 1 |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|-----|
| Number of dwelling-houses which after the making of closing orders were put into a fit state for human habitation; | Nil |
|---|-----|

General character of the defects found to exist:—
General dirtiness of interiors of houses, insufficient ventilation, absence of surface drainage, defective drains, foul w.c.'s, and insufficient receptacles for refuse.

Excrement and Refuse Disposal.

In this district the water carriage system is used for the disposal of excrement except in a few cases in which the houses by reason of their situation cannot be connected with the public sewer. Unfortunately, over one-third of the water-closets are not provided with flushing apparatus, and such apparatus is very necessary in the interests of sanitary efficiency and the public health. In this connection I might say that the nuisances caused by the neglect of occupiers to flush w.c.'s, even when provided with arrangements for flushing, became so serious that it was necessary to issue a special circular drawing attention to the responsibility of householders in this respect.

I am pleased to report that the eight last ash-pits remaining in the town have been abolished during the year, and have been replaced by proper sanitary dust-bins.

The scavenging of the town has been efficiently carried out throughout the year.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

An extension of the sewer in Harborough Road for a distance of 160 yards has been made to meet the requirements of some houses recently erected; and the old sewer above Gladstone Street has been converted into one for storm water.

The treatment of the sewage of the town has been carried out at the Sewage Disposal Works in a satisfactory manner. To ensure still further the effective treatment of the sewage and the maintenance of a satisfactory effluent, 16 acres of land have, on the recommendation of Messrs. Everard, Son, and Pick, the engineers, been added to the Sewage Farm; and a portion of this land has for some months been used for primary application with good results.

Slaughter Houses.

The three registered slaughter houses in the district have been visited at regular intervals by your Inspector. Certain nuisances were found and satisfactorily dealt with.

Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops.

Periodic inspection of dairies, cowsheds, and milkshops have been made and their condition found satisfactory.

Factories and Workshops (Bakehouses).

There were 46 inspections of factories and workshops made during the year, and the defects found were mainly want of cleanliness and matters in connection with sanitary accommodation. These defects were remedied on representation being made to the persons responsible.

The bakehouses have been inspected on various occasions. With the exception of a need for lime-washing in some cases there was found no ground for complaint

Inspection.

Systematic inspections of the district, in addition to those in cases of infectious disease, have been made by me throughout the year.

Hereto is appended the report of the Deputy Sanitary Inspector in the usual form.

Recommendations.

It is a source of regret to me that nothing has been done towards the adoption of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act of 1907. I would again draw your attention to the undoubted value of this inactment in assisting the work of your officers in maintaining the standard of sanitation necessary to the public health.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

HENRY GIBBONS,

Medical Officer of Health.

INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES' ANNUAL REPORT

Year ending December 31st, 1914.

During the past year 198 nuisances have been reported through the inspector's journal. Of these 191 were abated and 7 remained to be dealt with at the end of the year.

Six statutory notices were issued and some 200 letters and preliminary notices were sent out during the year.

The Nuisances found and dealt with were as follows :—

| | |
|--|-------|
| Defective and insufficient ventilation of drains | 27 |
| Defective paving | 9 |
| Orders to limewash | 31 |
| Offensive accumulations | 5 |
| Defective rainwater spoutings | 3 |
| Defective W.C. pans, etc. | 19 |
| Dirty W.C.'s | 33 |
| Structural defects | 6 |
| Pigstye nuisances | 5 |
| Insanitary refuse receptacles | 28 |
| Ashpits abolished | 8 |
| Over-crowding | 3 |
| Dirty conditions | 4 |
| Defective house ventilation | 9 |
| Smoke nuisances | 5 |
| Other nuisances | 2 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 198 |
| | <hr/> |

T. F. PARKER,
Deputy Inspector.

TABLE I.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1914 and previous years.

| Year. | Population estimated to Middle of each year. | BIRTHS | | | Total Deaths Registered in the District | | Transferable Deaths. | | Nett Deaths belonging to the District. | | | |
|-------|--|----------------------------|--------|-------|---|-------|---|--|---|--|--------------|-------|
| | | Un- corrected Number | Nett. | | Number | Rate | of Non- residents registered in the District. | of Resi- dents not registered in the District. | Under 1 Year of Age. | | At all Ages. | |
| | | | Number | Rate | | | | | Number | Rate per 1000 Births Register- ed. | Number | Rate |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 1909 | 3997 | | 121 | 30.20 | 48 | 12.0 | | 2 | 16 | 132. | 50 | 12.5 |
| 1910 | 4052 | | 93 | 22.90 | 46 | 11.3 | | 1 | 13 | 139. | 47 | 11.5 |
| 1911 | 4106 | | 98 | 23.86 | 39 | 9.4 | | 6 | 5 | 51.02 | 45 | 10.9 |
| 1912 | 4162 | | 87 | 20.90 | 34 | 8.16 | | 4 | 7 | 80.4 | 38 | 9.13 |
| 1913 | 4220 | 92 | 92 | 21.80 | 54 | 12.79 | | 4 | 10 | 108.6 | 58 | 13.74 |
| 1914 | 4276 | 82 | 82 | 19.17 | 47 | 10.99 | | 4 | 5 | 60.9 | 51 | 11.92 |

Area of District in acres
(land and inland water.)

2307

Total population at all ages...
Number of Inhabited houses
Average number of persons per house

4093
917
4.4

At Census of 1911.

TABLE II.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the year 1914

| NOTIFIABLE DISEASE. | NUMBER OF CASES NOTIFIED. | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | At all Ages. | Under 1 year. | 1 to 5 years. | 5 to 15 years. | 15 to 25 yrs. | 25 to 45 yrs. | 45 and upw'ds |
| Diphtheria (including Membranous Croup) | 7 | | 1 | 6 | | | |
| Erysipelas ... | 3 | | | | | 2 | 1 |
| Scarlet Fever ... | 14 | | 2 | 8 | 3 | 1 | |
| Enteric Fever ... | 2 | | | 1 | 1 | | |
| Poliomyelitis ... | 1 | | | 1 | | | |
| Pulmonary Tuberculosis ... | 10 | | | 1 | 3 | 6 | |
| Totals ... | 37 | | 3 | 17 | 7 | 9 | 1 |

Isolation Hospital for Small Pox alone.

Sanatoria: Creaton Sanatorium (Northamptonshire Insurance Committee).

TABLE III.

Causes of and Ages at death during the year 1914.

| CAUSES OF DEATH. | Nett deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring within or without the District. | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | All Ages. | Under 1 year. | 1 and under 2. | 2 and under 5 | 5 and under 15 | 15 and under 25 | 25 and under 45 | 45 and under 65 | 65 and up-wards |
| All causes { Certified Uncertified | 51 | | | | | | | | |
| Diphtheria & Croup | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Influenza ... | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Phthisis, (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) ... | 4 | | | | | 1 | | | |
| Tuberculous Meningitis ... | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | |
| Cancer, malignant disease ... | 6 | | | | | | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Rheumatic Fever ... | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Organic Heart Dis | 7 | | | | 2 | | | | 5 |
| Bronchitis ... | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Pneumonia (all forms | 5 | | | 2 | | | | 1 | 2 |
| Diarrhoea & Enteritis | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Cirrhosis of Liver ... | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Nephritis & Bright's Disease ... | 6 | | | | | | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Congenital Debility and Malformation including Premature Birth ... | 3 | 3 | | | | | | | |
| Violent Deaths, excluding Suicide ... | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Other defined diseases | 12 | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 8 |
| Totals ... | 51 | 5 | | 3 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 20 |

TABLE IV.—INFANT MORTALITY.

1914.

Nett Deaths from stated causes at various ages under 1 year of age.

| CAUSES OF DEATH | Under 1 Week. | 1—2 Weeks. | 2—3 Weeks. | 3—4 Weeks. | Total under 4 weeks. | 1—3 Months. | 3—6 Months. | 6—9 Months. | 9—12 Months. | Total Deaths under One Year. |
|---|---------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| ALL { Certified CAUSES { Uncertified | 2 | | | | 2 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 5 |
| Pneumonia (all forms | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Enteritis | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Congenital Malfor- mations | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Premature birth ... | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Atrophy, Debility, and Marasmus ... | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| Other causes ... | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2 | | | | 2 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 5 |

Nett Births in the year, legitimate, 79 ; illegitimate, 3.

Nett Deaths in the year, of legitimate infants, 4 ; illegitimate infants, 1.

RAINFALL TABLE.

| 1914. | Total Fall Inches | Days on which .01 or more fell. | Greatest Fall in 24 hours | Date of Greatest Fall. |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| January ... | .85 | 10 | .24 | 4th |
| February ... | 1.15 | 13 | .19 | 17th |
| March ... | 2.73 | 20 | .40 | 7th |
| April ... | .86 | 5 | .38 | 9th |
| May ... | 1.19 | 11 | .38 | 22nd |
| June ... | 2.04 | 7 | .92 | 9th |
| July ... | 1.83 | 9 | .67 | 1st |
| August ... | 1.60 | 11 | .67 | 5th |
| September ... | .98 | 6 | .63 | 9th |
| October ... | 2.48 | 12 | .68 | 14th |
| November ... | 2.29 | 17 | .41 | 4th |
| December ... | 6.57 | 28 | .94 | 28th |
| Totals | 20.43 | 149 | | |

Taken at Desborough Water-works, situate at 453 feet above ordnance.

| NATURE OF WORK. | OUTWORKERS' LISTS, SECT | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------|---------|------------------|-------------|---------|
| | Lists received from Employers | | | | | |
| | Twice in the year | | | Once in the year | | |
| | Lists | Outworkers | | Lists | Outworkers | |
| | | Contractors | Workmen | | Contractors | Workmen |
| Wearing Apparel— (1) making, &c | 10 | 226 | — | — | — | — |

and Workshop Act, 1901.

WORK

| 07 | | | Outwork in unwholesome premises, Section 108 | | | Outwork in Infected Premises Sections 109, 110 | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--|----------------|-------------------|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ces d on ers as ing or g lists. | Prosecutions | | Instances | Notices served | Prosecu- tions | Instances | Orders made (S. 110) | Prosecu- tions. S. 109, 110 |
| | Failing to keep or per- mit inspec- tion of lists | Failing to send lists | | | | | | |
| | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |

Administration of Factory and Workshop Act, 1901.

1.—INSPECTION OF FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, AND WORKPLACES, (including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors and Inspectors of Nuisances).

| Premises. | Inspections. | Written Notices | Prosecutions. |
|------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Factories | 21 | 9 | Nil |
| Workshops | 25 | 14 | Nil |
| | 46 | 23 | |

2.—DEFECTS FOUND IN FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

| Particulars. | Found. | Remedied | Referred to H.M. Inspector | Number of Prosecutions. |
|----------------------------|--------|----------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Want of cleanliness | 12 | 12 | Nil | Nil |
| Want of drainage of floors | 1 | 1 | „ | „ |
| Sanitary accommodation— | | | | |
| Insufficient | 1 | 1 | „ | „ |
| Unsuitable or defective | 5 | 5 | „ | „ |
| Other offences | 1 | 1 | „ | „ |
| | 20 | 20 | | |

4.—REGISTERED WORKSHOPS.

| Workshops on the Register (s. 131) at the end of the year. | Number. |
|--|---------|
| Bakehouses | 4 |
| Slaughterhouses | 3 |
| Other workshops | 15 |
| Total number of workshops on Register | 22 |

5.—OTHER MATTERS.

| Class. | Number. |
|--|---------|
| Failure to affix Abstract of Factory & Workshop Act (s. 133) | Nil |
| Action taken in matters referred by H.M. Inspector as remediable under the Public Health Acts, but not under the Factory and Workshop Act (s. 5, 1901) | Nil |
| Other | 4 |

No underground Bakehouses.